



America's First Choice

CONTACT

Vol. 24, No. 01

Magazine for and about Air Force Reserve members assigned
to the 349th Air Mobility Wing, Travis Air Force Base, California

January 2006

Operation Teddy Bear reaches out, fills need in local communities

(Story on page 6)



New Year - new Mission Statement

Welcome to the first UTA in 2006. I trust all of you had a wonderful holiday season and are ready to return to work with enthusiasm and determination to start the New Year off right.

The new secretary of the Air Force has given us a new mission statement to grasp and form, it is: "to deliver sovereign options for the defense of the United States of America and its Global interests - to fly and fight in Air, Space and Cyberspace." The mission statement defines what the Air Force accomplishes on a daily basis. See Page 10 of this *Contact* for a complete article about the new mission statement.

Now I would like to congratulate some of the wing's outstanding members. The wing has four newly promoted colonels. I would like to recognize **Linda Harlan, Abel Barrientes, David Goodhue** and **Darrell Young** for their new eagle wings. I would also like to acknowledge the wings annual award winners. **Capt. Audrey Swinney**, 349th Memorial Affairs Squadron, Company Grade Officer of the

Year; **Senior Master Sgt. Dennis Thorpe**, 749th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Senior Noncommissioned Officer of the Year; **Technical Sgt. Mike Melton**, 349th Civil Engineer Squadron, Noncommissioned Officer of the Year; **Senior Airman Eric Pena**, 349th Security Forces Squadron, Airman of the Year; **Master Sgt. Dennis Madsen**, 349th Memorial Affairs Squadron, First Sergeant



of the Year; and **Master Sgt. Carol Robideaux**, 349th Aircraft Maintenance



By Brig. Gen. Thomas M. Gisler, Jr.

Squadron, Honor Guardsman of the Year. I'd like to extend my congratulations to them all. When you see these newly promoted officers and award winners, pat them on the back and say, "Job well done."

We are beginning a new year with more missions and a continued commitment to our country to keep our land free. What I need most of all is for each of you to be personally ready to go, if the call comes for us.

So with that said, enjoy your UTA, take advantage of the training to be had this weekend, be safe always and keep up the professional can do attitude that this wing exemplifies.

photo by Patti Schwab-Holloway, 349th Air Mobility Wing



Good deeds: The 349th Chaplain's office sponsored the 349th Air Mobility Wing Food Drive, collecting 1,699 pounds of non-perishable food along with the Honor Guard raising \$450.00 to purchase additional food to be donated. Donations will be split with half of the food to benefit Heather House, a shelter that provides temporary shelter and food to homeless families and the other half to Mission Solano, the local area homeless assistance center. Pictured (starting from the top left) are Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Gregory Stringer, 349th Chaplain's office, Mr. Tom Neal, Mr. Kwanza Duviani and Mr. Richard Hust all personnel from Mission Solano.



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January 2006

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Operation Teddy Bear was a huge success with approximately 1,000 Teddy bears given out at elementary schools around Solano County this past holiday season.

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cover photo by Technical Sgt. Wendy Weidenhamer,
349th Air Mobility Wing

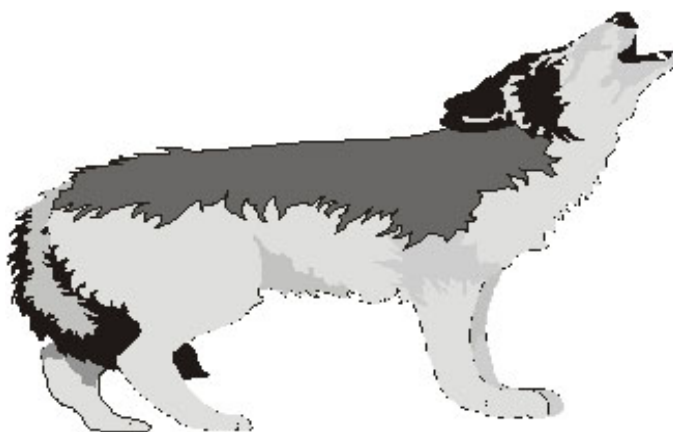
Bear with me: The members of the 349th Air Mobility Wing support "Operation Teddy Bear" this past holiday season. This operation brings Christmas cheer to many children at local area elementary schools. Appropriately named "Operation Teddy Bear," wing volunteers will deliver 1,000 Teddy Bears to children at local schools on various occasions between Nov. 21 and Dec. 16. The program began as a grass-roots effort more than 20 years ago. (See story on Page 6.)

How do you howl?

At the beginning of every year I always think, "Wow! Has another year really come and gone again?", and I will think back over what transpired during the past year. Reflecting on 2005, what a blessed year we had! Our Wing simply rocked! Our heads are still spinning with the awards we won, from Daedalian to Raincross and everything in between. And, as Col. Robert Millmann, Jr., said last month, it's all because of you and the importance of the contributions you each make. Without your individual excellence, we would not be the mighty 349th winning all these awards! But it's more than that.

How many times have I been out and about observing all that you're doing, and in the process, seen the acts of kindness and service for your fellow airmen. Many times you're unaware I see this, but I do. For example, what about Technical Sgt. Jay Jacobs, 749th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, who has assisted so many of our units with their slideshows and electronic needs for every type of event possible? He's one of our unsung heroes who unselfishly gives of his talents to the entire Wing, thanks to the blessing from his leadership, Chief Master Sgt. Gregory McGee and Col. Thomas Linster. What about all the personnel who volunteer their time for Operations Gratitude, Give Thanks and Teddy Bear, and do it on their own time, expecting nothing in return? How about our Honor Guard? Talk about service before self! The Honor Guard is everywhere--retirement ceremonies, special

events, funerals, memorial services, military balls, enlisted workshops. You name it they are there, and they are taking care of business as an additional duty to their regular reserve job! Thanks to the efforts of Master Sgt. Jim Barber and Master Sgt. Darlene Chaboude, both from our 349th Maintenance Operations Flight, and their great team sponsored by the Top Three, on Dec. 4, we had a wonderful ceremony recognizing our great Honor Guard and Master Sgt. Carol Robideaux, 349th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, who competed and won as our 2005 James Ernest Honor Guard Member of the Year. Congratulations!



These are just a few of the many that I routinely see reaching out to their fellow airmen to uplift and support. This is what builds our humanity; this is what builds our morale as a Wing--knowing that we're looking out for each other, being good wingmen saying, "I've got your back." It's simply a matter of caring. Remember, nobody cares how much you know until you show them how much you care. Who



By Command Chief Master Sgt.
Patricia A. Thornton

said that first? I don't know, but as many of you know, I repeat it all the time. I see it proven time and again! It all boils down to expecting and looking for the best in each other. Along these lines, Mr. Jack Watts, our Family Readiness guru, shared this old Native American tale with me, which I pass along to you:

"One evening an old Chief told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside all people. He said, 'My son, the battle is between two wolves inside us all. One is Evil. It is anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority and ego.

The other is Good. It is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, consideration and faith.'

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather, 'Which wolf wins?' The old Chief simply replied, 'The one you feed.'"

Which one do you feed? How do you howl?

349th Air Mobility Wing Meetings

Top 3 Council meeting is held at 11:30 a.m. at the Sierra Inn Dining Facility on Sunday of each UTA.

Rising Six Council meetings are held at 11:30 a.m., Sierra Inn Dining Facility on Sunday of each scheduled UTA.

Operation Teddy Bear meetings will resume in February and are held at 1 p.m., Sunday of each scheduled UTA in the 349th Air Mobility Wing

Headquarters Bldg. 112 Conference Room.

Human Resource Development Council meetings will resume in February and are held on Saturday of A-Flight UTAs at 2 p.m. in the 349th AMW Headquarters Bldg. 112 Conference Room and is directly followed by the HRDC subcommittee meeting for **Outreach and Community Relations** at 3 p.m.

The HRDC subcommittee meeting for **Recognition** is held Sundays of A-Flight UTAs at 2 p.m. in the 349th AMW Headquarters Bldg. 112 Conference Room.

The HRDC subcommittee meeting for **Retention and Recruiting** is held Sunday of B-Flight and C-Flight UTAs at 1 p.m. in the 349th Maintenance Group Bldg. 31 Conference Room.

349th named 'Best in 4th Air Force'

by Patti Schwab-Holloway
349th Air Mobility Wing

During a ceremony, Nov. 17, at the 4th Air Force commanders' conference in Riverside, Calif., the 349th Air Mobility Wing was named the 'Best in 4th Air Force' and awarded the 2004 Greater Riverside Chamber of Commerce Raincross Trophy.

The Raincross Trophy recognizes outstanding accomplishments by units under 4th Air Force, headquartered at March Air Reserve Base. The award's criteria include 10 measured categories ranging from mission effectiveness to community relations.

Fourteen units competed for the award but the 349th Wing received this distinction for its achievements in an unprecedented record of providing strategic airlift, aerial refueling and support functions for America's war on terrorism for the period Oct. 1, 2003 through Sept. 30, 2004.

Brig. Gen. Thomas M. Gisler, Jr., 349th

AMW commander, and Command Chief Master Sergeant Patricia A. Thornton, the wing's command chief, accepted the award on behalf of the wing.

"To be named 'Best in 4th Air Force,' especially during a time of war," said General Gisler, "shows the men and women of the 349th how much leadership recognizes the huge effort and commitment it takes on their part to provide 'Global reach for America.'"

"With the Future Total Force concept, which is the Air Force's plan to better integrate the Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve and active duty components, the 349th Air Mobility Wing will continue to be essential to the great success of the Air Force mission," General Gisler continued. "So this recognition, among so many hard working reserve units, is especially, appreciated."

The Greater Riverside Chamber of Commerce created the Raincross Trophy award seven years ago. The 349th had



The Raincross Trophy, a perpetual trophy, awarded to the best wing in 4th Air Force. The winner is given a replica, while the perpetual trophy remains at 4th AF command headquarters, March Air Reserve Base, Calif.

previously been awarded this honor in 2002. Other past awards were presented to the 446th Airlift Wing, McChord Air Force Base, Wash., 433rd Airlift Wing, Kelly Air Force Base, Texas, jointly to 4th Air Force aerial tanker units for their participation in Operation Allied Force in the Balkans, and

most recently the 434th Air Refueling Wing was presented with the 2003 Raincross Trophy.

Some of the 349th Wing's accomplishments included the 349th Operations Group completing 750 major deployments with more than 13,500 hours safely flown; the 349th Maintenance Group achieving the highest mission capable and home station departure reliability rates in 5 years; the 349th Mission Support Group providing a critical link in the logistics war effort with 11,130 monthly missions, 65,000 tons of cargo and 125,000 passengers on-time departure rate; and the 349th Medical Group providing medical support for more than 1,300 days, with more than 700 flying hours and transporting more than 100 patients in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



photo by Master Sgt. Bill Kimble, 4th Combat Camera Squadron

During a ceremony, Nov. 17, at the 4th Air Force commanders' conference in Riverside, Calif., Brig. Gen. Thomas M. Gisler, Jr., 349th Air Mobility Wing commander, and Chief Master Sergeant Patricia A. Thornton, the wing's command chief, accept the 2004 Greater Riverside Chamber of Commerce Raincross Trophy naming the 349th as the 'Best in 4th Air Force.'

Getting our Teddy-bearings on holidays

Story and photos by
Technical Sgt. Wendy Weidenhamer
349th Air Mobility Wing

Two dark Teddy Bear eyes surrounded by white fur peeked over the edge of a large brown paper bag making contact with the eyes of several curious kindergartners and first graders entering the classroom. The kids were beaming with anticipation of what the morning would bring.

Waiting to greet these Bransford Elementary School students were several of Santa's elves, most were volunteers from Travis Air Force Base, who had arrived earlier to transform the room into Santa's first stop this year. Bags of goodies printed on the outside with drawings of smiling reindeer and topped with Teddy bears, sat nestled in the corner near Santa's special chair.

These elves, all dressed in their military uniforms, show another side of a multi-faceted Air Force, as they hand out small U.S. flags while talking and laughing with the children. The children display a momentary awe at the adults in green camouflage uniforms, an awe which slowly dissolves into laughter and lots of questions.

"It's important for kids to see another side of the military, to see that we are not only a fighting force but a peace-keeping force, said one of Santa's elves," Senior Master Sgt. Jan Lambard, 349th Airlift Control Element Operations. She is also a member of the Top Three Council, the organization that sponsors Operation Teddy Bear every year.

In the back of the room, Master Sgt. Carol Robideaux, 349th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Senior Airman Brianna Hunt, 60th Medical Surgery Squadron and Senior Master Sgt. Manuel Ruiz, 82nd Aerial Port Squadron, members



A giant Teddy Bear hug for Santa: A student from Bransford Elementary School in Fairfield, jumped out of his chair to greet Santa Claus, Technical Sgt. Eric Duvoe, 349th Component Maintenance Squadron, with a huge bear hug when Santa arrived to begin giving out Teddy bears, goodies and smiles.

of the Team Travis Honor Guard, stand poised and ready to demonstrate folding and presenting the U.S. flag. They soon begin their march to the front of the room with their precise cadence echoing clearly as their highly polished shoes sound out each step with a crisp tap, tap, tap.

Then the sound of Christmas music is heard and Master Sgt. Mike Lattanzi, 349th AMXS, appears in the doorway to announce, "Late breaking news, Santa is going to be a little late due to a snow storm, but the reindeer were working very hard to get Santa here."

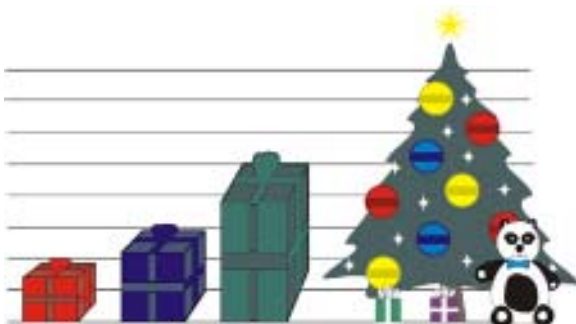
Soon the sound of sleigh bells is heard and in walks Santa, Technical Sgt. Eric Duvoe, 349th Component Repair Squadron. As

he walks by the children, who are seated in the center of the room, one small boy jumps out of his seat and runs to wrap his arms around Santa's waist and buries his head into Santa's soft red suit giving him a giant "Teddy" bear hug.

The fun has begun. Santa wiggles into his chair and with good humor and jolly smiles, waits for each child who, one by one, joins him. Standing quietly each child listens intently as elf, Master Sgt. Keith Bennett, 749th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, scans the long list of names of good little girls and boys, to always find just the right name. With a sigh of relief the newest Teddy Bear owner reaches for his prize.

This scenario will be repeated several

(See Rewards Page 9)



Travis Team shows appreciation to Honor Guard



Listen here: Senior Master Sgt. Sherry Jensen, 349th Component Maintenance Squadron, was Master of Ceremonies for the Honor Guard recognition luncheon.



Call to order: Brig. Gen. Thomas M. Gisler, Jr., 349th Air Mobility Wing commander, prepares to present awards to members of the honor guard during the Dec. 4, Honor Guard Recognition Luncheon.

Thanks for the memories: Master Sgt. Jon Saunders, 349th Honor Guard Superintendent, took a moment out during the luncheon to present Lt. Col. Truman Lum, 349th Mission Support Group deputy commander, now retired, a memento from the honor guard members to thank him for his years of outstanding support.



The winner is: Master Sgt. Carol Robideaux is presented the James Ernst's Best Honor Guardsman of the Year award.

photos by
Technical Sgt.
Wendy
Weidenhamer



More peas, please: Members of the Travis Team volunteer to serve the honor guard members lunch to show their appreciation for all the hard work these men and women do for civilian and military communities.

Facing unknowns without fear can be done

Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Gregory Stringer
349th Air Mobility Wing

A happy and blessed New Year's to each of you and your families! Here we are in the brand new year of 2006! Whew -- the year of 2005 went quickly! We accomplished many things, experienced new challenges and changes in our lives. Some things were good, while other things were difficult and even overwhelming at times.

We saw growth in our knowledge, promotions, new enriching experiences, and perhaps new additions to our family. And yet for others, the same year brought the loss of home, health or loved ones. As a nation we saw and felt the destruction and loss of life when Hurricane Katrina hit our shores in the South. But with that destruction, came the reaction and response of love, care and rebuilding from the people of our Wing, Nation, and many other countries.

As we peer into the new year, we are not able to see the coming events. It is like a group of people testing the ice on a pond to see if it is strong enough and thick enough to carry their weight. You can see them walking slowly, listening for any sound of cracking, and looking to see how thick the ice is around them.

But unlike those people testing the ice, God reminds us that we can walk into the

future facing the unknowns without fear. Yes, I said without fear. In fact, God reminds us in the Bible that we can "Step into the future with Confidence!" Why is that you may be asking?

It is because God reminds us that He will be with us every step of the way to help us, steady us, forgive us, renew us, refresh us, protect us, guide us, teach us, love us, and even carry us through everything that can come upon us in this life. Yes, even in tragedy and in death God will not leave us. He will be our strength, courage and help. He also opens peoples' hearts around us to love and help us simply because we have a need and have called upon Him for help. Wow, what a confidence builder!



Here are some passages found in the Holy Bible to ponder: Psalm(Ps) 23, Ps 46, Ps 121, Ps 130; Joshua 1:1-9; Isaiah 40; Luke 1:37; John 11: 25-26; John 14:1-6, 25-27; Romans 8; Philippians 4:4-13. These passages will certainly remind you that

God will help us "step into the future with confidence," since He is with us.

All of this is important to know, remember, and share as we move into the unknowns of 2006 with its daily routine and with the not-so-routine events that life will bring our way. God's promises are sure and dependable. His promises are Eternal and will not pass away over time. They surely are the Rock upon which we can stand with confidence.

It is good to know and to remind each other we are never alone, even if no other human being is near us because God is with us. He knows the needs of our hearts and minds before our requests leave our lips and is already working to meet them.

It is good to know that God has a purpose for everything in our lives; even difficult things we may not understand (Jeremiah 29:11).

It is good to know God intends to use everything that comes our way in life to mold us and build us into a person that is stronger, more loving and merciful. This enables us to better serve Him and be a blessing to others and our world.

So as we approach these uncertainties of 2006, remember we can be certain and confident that with God's presence in our lives, we can "step into the future with confidence!" I encourage you to "watch, wait, and see" how God will be working in and through you this New Year.

God Bless you and your family!



Standing tall: Brig. Gen. Robert W. Marcott, (center) a former commander of the 708th Military Airlift Squadron at Travis AFB, and now a Mobilization Assistant at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, returned to present a Joint Forces Commendation Medal to Maj. Richard Tubbs, 301st Airlift Squadron (right). General Marcott requested the honor of presenting the medal in front of fellow squadron members. Lt. Col. Dale Andrews, 301st commander (left) immediately agreed to the request. Several additional 301st AS squadron members were treated to the honor of having their medals presented by a General officer.

Ever the mentor and example, General Marcott also took this opportunity to explain his role at Pacific Air Command, Hickam AFB, and the importance of the events in the Pacific, and how they relate to our present struggle in the war on terrorism.

courtesy photo

Supplemental deployment health assessment starts

by Staff Sgt. Todd Lopez
Air Force Print News

Airmen returning from deployment now have two opportunities to let healthcare workers know of their mental and physical health status.

As of December the Air Force requires all Airmen returning from deployments to complete a post-deployment health reassessment. The PDHRA needs to be completed between 90 and 180 days after returning home from a deployment. The PDHRA complements the post-deployment health assessment, which Airmen complete at the end of their deployments.

The PDHRA is another layer of assessment meant to capture information about mental and physical health issues that may not have materialized immediately upon a return home, said Lt. Col. Jim Favret, the clinical consultant to the Air Force Surgeon General for the biomedical science corps.

On paper, the PDHRA is a four-page Department of Defense form called DD2900. That document is already available online. But Airmen will not fill out the paper form. Instead, some 90 days after returning from overseas, their unit deployment manager will send them a link to a Web-based version of the form.

The results of an Airman's PDHRA will be sent to his or her medical treatment facility for review. At the Airman's request, or as

the result of a determination made by someone reviewing their assessment, an Airman may be called in to discuss potential health concerns with a medical professional.

The assessment also asks questions about an Airman's interaction with his or her family, use of alcohol, and experiences while on deployment. "Have you had any experience that was so frightening, horrible, or upsetting that, in the past month, you felt numb or detached from others, activities, or your surroundings?" one question asks.

The PDHRA gathers information from Airmen about their current health status with questions similar to what might be filled out when visiting a doctor's office. For instance, the assessment provides a list of symptoms Airmen can select. There are also questions about injuries or wounds sustained during deployment and potential exposure to environmental hazards.

The assessment also asks questions about an Airman's interaction family, use of alcohol, and experiences while deployed.

While the PDHRA is not a substitute for a consultation with a medical professional, it is another opportunity for Airmen to let the Air Force know about their health status. And it is another opportunity to catch something serious before it can escalate.

The paper version of the PDHRA can be found at: www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/forminfo/forminfo3292.html

Rewards...

(Continued from Page 6)

times with approximately 1,000 Teddy Bears given out at elementary schools around Solano County during this past holiday season, and with many of the same volunteers who wouldn't miss this event every year.



Checking it twice: Santa and a hopeful child listens as elf, Master Sgt. Keith Bennett, 749th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, makes sure the child's name is on the list of good little girls and boys—and it always is.

Sacrifices may be small but the rewards can be so many.

"I don't consider it giving up anything I consider it gaining the enjoyment of watching how much the children appreciate everything we do," said Technical Sgt. Dave Hoggard, 349th CMS Aircraft Fuel System Craftsman.

Also helping Santa was Mr. William Ronders, who retired from the 45th Aerial Port Squadron, and is one of the original founders of Operation Teddy Bear. His many stories of past Operations reflect his dedication and the enjoyment he gets from giving his time to see the smiles of so many children.

Mr. Ronders remembers, "One year we were at Crescent Elementary School. The Santa that year was about 6 foot 4 inches tall. While he was giving gifts out to the kids, one boy looked Santa up and down, and looked him up and down again. He finally said, 'Man you got to be good to get down all them chimneys'."

Santa's elves made this day look easy but it takes more than a few good people.

Many talents are needed throughout the year to take Operation Teddy Bear on the road, for what may be the biggest holiday season event for many Solano County kids.

Find out how you can be a part of connecting those dark Teddy bear eyes to a child's world where one fluffy Teddy bear can possibly bring so much joy.

Air Force releases new mission statement

by Master Sgt. Mitch Gettle
Air Force Print News

The realities of the world have changed dramatically since the creation of the Air Force in 1947 and continue to change almost daily.

With these changes in mind, Air Force leaders released a new mission statement Dec. 7, that defines the current and future direction of the Air Force.

"Today, our world is fast paced, constantly shifting and filled with a wide range of challenges," Secretary of the Air Force Michael W. Wynne and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley wrote in a joint Letter to Airmen. "Our mission is our guiding compass, and now more than ever we need it to be clear and precise."

The mission statement defines the "where and what" the Air Force accomplishes on a daily basis:

The mission of the United States Air Force is to deliver sovereign options for the defense of the United States of America and its global interests — to fly and fight in Air, Space, and Cyberspace.

The statement includes two new concepts, "sovereign options" and "cyberspace," which the secretary and chief defined.

They said having sovereign options is the essence of being a superpower.

"Our task is to provide the president, the combatant commanders, and our nation with an array of options ... options that are not limited by the tyranny of distance, the urgency of time, or the strength of our enemy's defenses," they said. "With one hand the Air Force can deliver humanitarian assistance to the farthest reaches of the globe, while with the other hand we can destroy a target anywhere in the world."

The term cyberspace includes network security, data transmission and the sharing of information.

"We have quite a few of our Airmen dedicated to cyberspace ... from security awareness, making sure the networks can't be penetrated, as well as figuring out countermeasures," Secretary Wynne said. "The Air Force is a natural leader in the cyber world and we thought it would be best to recognize that talent."

"The mission of the United States Air Force is to deliver sovereign options for the defense of the United States of America and its global interests — to fly and fight in Air, Space, and Cyberspace."

-- Air Force Mission Statement

Adversaries of the United States will use any method or venue necessary to contest America, and it is an Airmen's calling to dominate air, space and cyberspace, the leaders said.

"If we can decisively and consistently control these commons, then we will deter countless conflicts," they said. "If our enemies underestimate our resolve, then we will fly, fight, and destroy them."

Using past air power pioneers as examples of understanding the mission, they said, "The Air Force's mission statement has evolved over time, but it does not change the nature of who we are or what we do."

News Notes

Troops get phone calling cards

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service partners with AT&T to deliver call centers designed with specific military requirements in mind to give deployed troops affordable, reliable and dependable communications.

Six air conditioned AT&T phone centers in Iraq recently underwent a major renovation to make them even more comfortable for troops to connect from the front lines to the home front. The upgrades included metallic floor and wall covering for added durability as well as revisions to the trailers themselves to better withstand movement around the country.

There are currently 48 phone centers in Iraq with more than 1,200 telephones. Each phone center contains 12, 24 or 48 phones. In Iraq alone, total phone minute usage average was 324 minutes per phone per day for the month of October, with the total minute usage in Iraq reaching 11.6 million minutes.

Any American, even non-authorized exchange customers, can also help troops

make a phone call at any of the 70 phone centers in Iraq, Kuwait, Afghanistan and Kyrgyzstan through AAFES' "Help Our Troops Call Home" initiative. This support effort makes it easy to send a Military Exchange Global Prepaid Phone Card to U.S. service members around the world.

More than 74,000 Military Exchange Global Prepaid Phone Cards have been distributed to deployed troops serving in Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom since the Department of Defense approved AAFES' implementation of the phone card campaign in April 2004. (AAFES)

Honor Guard looking for Airmen

The Best Base Honor Guard in AMC is looking for reservist who can perform two mandays a month in addition to their UTA's. All Members go through a 5 day class, and become part of a team who performs in Air Force Ceremonies, military funerals, colors, retirements and many more. If you are interested please call the Honor Guard at (707) 424-5872 and arrange a meeting with the Superintendent.

Hospital dining facility closed

David Grant Medical Center's dining facility is scheduled to undergo a major \$1.4 million two-phase reconstruction project as of Jan. 9. The renovation will last approximately six months and lead to improved long-term customer service.

The Nutritional Medicine Flight at has begun alternative dining services:

Dining Hall locations & times:

- Mon – Fri: Dining room seating area until April; limited hot meal service and some Grab & Go:

— 6 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Breakfast

— 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Early Lunch

— 4:30 p.m. – 6 p.m. Dinner

- Weekends/holidays and after March: double doors next to north elevators – Limited Hot Meal service:

— 8:00 – 11:30 a.m. Breakfast/Brunch

— 12:00 – 2 p.m. Lunch

— 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. Dinner

Mon – Fri Extended Grab & Go Service – DGMC Auditorium Reception Counter
— 10:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Grab & Go

'That's my team!' -- Travis Firefighters win again in worldwide Firefighter Combat Challenge competition

by Staff Sgt. Meredith Mingleddorff
349th Air Mobility Wing

I hollered, "That's my team!" when I saw Team Travis firefighters on ESPN. I was amazed! My fellow Airmen right there on national television at the Firefighter Combat Challenge. Man was I proud! I sat there in awe for the duration of the event, amazed and curious as to which of my fellow Travis personnel were up there on that screen. Did I know any of them? Had I passed by these guys in the Base Exchange? I couldn't believe these were Airmen, but they were, not just any Airmen either. They were from Travis!

This year I have answers. Taking on the world in the 2005 Challenge, were two of our very own 349th Reservists, Technical Sgt. Michael Melton and Senior Airman Joseph Almony, firefighters with the 349th Civil Engineer Squadron. These amazing Airmen helped Team Travis bring home the

trophy for the fastest Stream-light Relay with a time of four-minutes and 25.14 seconds. Team Travis competed against 240 firefighters to win this title for the second year in a row!

You'd be amazed to see what these troops take on as an extra duty. These guys, wearing "full bunker gear" and breathing apparatus, compete in a series of five tasks. Climb to the top of a five story tower carrying a 42-pound high-rise pack; then hoist a 42-pound hose roll to the top. Next, they descend to the ground where they simulate chopping by swinging a nine-pound shot mallet on the end of a 160 pound steel beam. They zigzag 140 feet through simulation hydrants to the fourth station, where they advance an attack hose a distance of 75 feet. Finally, they drag a life sized, 175 pound "victim" a distance of 100 feet to the finish line. Now squadron PT doesn't seem so bad after all does it?

Sergeant Melton won't give up the team's training secrets but the Annual Firefighter Combat Challenge is definitely a competition that encourages fitness. Demonstrating the rigors of firefighting, the Challenge is about performing one of the most dangerous and demanding jobs safer and better.

As valued members of the 349th, Sergeant Melton and Airman Almony support our Wing by training hard and passing on their enthusiasm to fellow firefighters, setting higher standards for all of us but especially for our safety personnel. Travis Air Force Base can rest



photo by Staff Sgt. Matt McGovern, 60th Air Mobility Wing

Hammer it home: Technical Sgt. Mike Melton, 349th Civil Engineer Squadron, competes against another firefighter on the second day of the World Firefighter Combat Challenge. The competition ended Dec. 3. The Travis Team Firefighters are trying to retain their title as world champions.



photo by Staff Sgt. Matt McGovern, 60th Air Mobility Wing

Feel the burn: Technical Sgt. Mike Melton, 349th Civil Engineer Squadron, Staff Sgt. Harry Myers, 60th CES and Senior Airman Joe Almony, 349th CES, warm up on stationary bikes before taking part in an event at the World Firefighter Combat Challenge. The team won their event with a time of 4 minutes 25.14 seconds.

assured that our lives are in the hands of the best firefighters in the world! These two are truly a stellar example of our ability to adapt and overcome.

As a Wing we applaud their efforts and can show our support by following their example. Train hard, be ready and strive to do your best no matter what your area of expertise.

Check your local listings for ESPN's coverage of this year's event. Invite that young civilian over and show them what Reservist are capable of. Cheer these two remarkable Airmen as they race through the course and I promise your heart will swell with pride. You'll remember why you were called

to serve and I bet you tap at least one person on the shoulder and point out, "That's my team!" Don't ever forget it, we're all a team.



In Memoriam

"It is with regret that I must announce that we have lost a member of our wing to drowning. Master Sgt. Johnny Yu from the 349th Aeromedical Staging Squadron on temporary duty at Hickam AFB, Hawaii, drowned while kayaking. The sea-craft was hit by a wave and overturned. Master Sgt. Yu was reported missing when a co-worker and an employee of the kayak rental company with him were unable to locate him in the water.

A Search and Rescue effort was underway by the Honolulu Fire Department, the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Air Force in the water in the surrounding area where the kayak craft was last seen. Master Sgt. Yu's remains were recovered Dec. 6



**January 8, 1956 -
December 7, 2005**

at 1:45 p.m. Pacific Standard Time. He has been assigned to this wing since 1993 and a valued member who always was there to help out. His energy and spirit were contagious and he went the extra mile regardless the task. He was a stellar performer in our award winning Honor Guard who took great pride in serving others. He will be truly missed."

-- Brig. Gen. Thomas M. Gisler Jr., 349th AMW Commander

"Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family, friends and co-workers of Master Sgt. Johnny Yu from our 349th Aeromedical Staging Squadron and member of our Honor Guard."

-- Chief Master Sgt. Patricia A. Thornton, 349th AMW Command Chief

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349th Wing 2005 Annual Award Winners

Captain Audrey S. Swinney,
349th Memorial Affairs Squadron
-- Company Grade Officer of the Year

Senior Master Sgt. Dennis M. Thorpe,
749th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
-- Senior Noncommissioned Officer of the Year

Master Sgt. Dennis G. Madsen,
349th Memorial Affairs Squadron
-- First Sergeant of the Year

Master Sgt. Carol L. Robideaux,
349th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
-- Honor Guard of the Year

Technical Sgt. Michael C. Melton,
349th Civil Engineer Squadron -- Noncommissioned
Officer of the Year

Senior Airman Eric J. Pena,
349th Security Forces Squadron
-- Airman of the Year